

VZCZCXRO8906
PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW RUEHSL
DE RUEHBUL #2469/01 2341709
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 221709Z AUG 09
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1022
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 002469

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: AFGHAN ELECTIONS: FEW DIFFICULTIES WITH
TRANSPORTATION OF BALLOT MATERIALS TO KABUL

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: In the two days after polls closed, the transportation of ballots to provincial centers and Kabul has run smoothly. Ballot box and tally sheet retrieval began yesterday and will continue through August 28. So far, ISAF and ANSF have successfully delivered about half of all ballot boxes and results to provincial offices. Despite some threats from insurgents to disrupt the transportation of elections materials, PRTs are reporting few difficulties. END SUMMARY.

A (Mostly) Smooth Road to Ballot Collection Centers

¶2. (U) According to ISAF, transportation of election material from the provinces to the tally center in Kabul is going smoothly, though it will take several days to get all of the material to Kabul. Tally sheets from polling centers around the country were placed with reconciliation lists and voting lists into tamper-evident bags on August 20 and 21. ISAF and ANSF are responsible for transporting these bags to District and Provincial IEC Headquarters, from where the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the UN will move the materials to Kabul for counting. 199 tamper-evident bags containing results from polling centers in Panjshir and Parwan have already arrived at IEC Headquarters in Kabul. The IEC expects the remaining elections materials to arrive by August 28.

¶3. (SBU) On August 22, ISAF shared reports with the Embassy Election Team that insurgents are planning to attack convoys carrying election materials back to the Provincial IEC hubs from the polling centers. Despite threats throughout the south, east, and west, however, we have not yet heard reports of insurgents interfering with the transportation of election materials. The only transportation difficulties that have been reported to us involve a lack of air assets in Purchaman and Gulistan districts in Farah province.

Transportation Details from the Provinces

¶4. (SBU) RC South:

-- Kandahar: As of the afternoon of August 22, ballot counting had not yet occurred in 20 polling centers in Kandahar Province, including certain centers in Arghandab, Panjwayi, and Maywand, and all polling centers in Khakrez. Most ballot boxes are being retrieved by ground transportation, though ISAF air transport retrieved ballots in Nish the evening of August 21.

-- Zabul: As of late evening on August 21, counting in Zabul was ongoing. The Zabul PEO told the State Department PRT Officer that he thought voter turnout was approximately 18-20,000, or 15 percent of the 128,000 voters in Zabul. Counting is expected to be completed on Saturday, August 22.

15. (SBU) RC East:

-- Nuristan: The retrieval of election materials, including ballots, was nearly on schedule in Nuristan. Officials will transport materials for collection to Nurgram district, Jalalabad, and Asadabad rather than to the provincial capital Parun in order to accommodate the rough terrain. In Nurgram district all polling sites had delivered their tally sheets and ballots to the collection point by mid-afternoon on August 22. Dow Ab district materials, with the exception of those from Kolak village, also arrived on August 22.

-- Paktya: Several district governors reported to the PRT representative that ballots were counted at the polling centers, transported to the district centers, and in many cases were already on their way to the IEC center in Gardez. As of 18:00 the PRT confirmed that the IEC center had received tally sheets from all of Paktya's districts except Chamkani, Jani Khel, Laja Mengal, and Dand wa Patan. ISAF is scheduled to move Jani Khel's tally sheets by air on August 23, though coalition forces are working to have ANA air pick up the sheets before August 23. According to the district governors, ANSF were assisting with the transport of ballots and tally sheets. The district governor in Wazi Zadran also noted that ANSF were very pleased with their cooperation with coalition forces.

-- Paktika: PEO Taj Ali reported to PRT that all votes have been counted in polling stations throughout Paktika. The delivery of tally sheets and non-sensitive items to the IEC office in Sharana is ongoing; Taj Ali expects all material to arrive by Monday, August 24. The IEC is currently tabulating

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results they have received from Orgun, Bermel, Sarobi, Yaya Khel, Sharana, and Saw Hawza.

-- Wardak and Logar: All of the ballots in Logar are now at the IEC warehouse in Pul-i-Alam. In Wardak all ballots are at the IEC warehouse in Mayden Shah, except for the ballots from Markazi Beshood, Hasa Awal Beshood, Jalrez, and Daymardad districts. Ballots from these districts were in transit as of late afternoon on August 22. Ballots from both Wardak and Logar will most likely be transported to Kabul either late August 22 or early August 23.

-- Ghazni: As of the afternoon of August 22, coalition air assets have transported ballots and voting materials from Zanakhan, Rashidan, Khogyani, Giro, and Jagatu districts back to the IEC in Ghazni City. Coalition assets will seek to return materials from Jaghori, Malestan, Nawur, and Ajiristan. Afghan security forces will transport materials from other districts.

-- Panjshir: On August 21, the PEO transported tamper-evident bags from 48 polling centers to Kabul, and is ready to transport an additional 43 tamper-evident bags today, August 22, bringing the total to 91. There is some confusion over the remaining four tamper-evident bags, which may have arrived at the PEO mislabeled.

16. (U) RC North:

-- Mazar-e-Sharif: The IEC Regional Coordinator for the Northwest reported that all ballot boxes had arrived in the provincial centers as of 17:30 August 22, and they will be flown from there to Kabul.

17. (U) RC West:

-- Ghor: UNDP-Elect reported to the PRT representative that the securing and transport of sensitive materials is on track. UNDP and IEC predict all sensitive materials will be in Chaghcharan by August 23, and they expect to send the sensitive materials to Kabul the same afternoon.

-- Farah: Officials in Farah are focusing on the transportation of ballots out of Purchaman and Gulistan. Purchaman is isolated from the rest of Farah by extremely high mountain ranges. Unpaved roads limit travel from the neighboring district of Gulistan, so materials will need to be airlifted back to Farah. However, air assets are broken with no prospect as to when they will be repaired. Gulistan faces a similar problem due to a shortage of air assets. The U.S. Marines are proposing to escort the materials to Delaram and then send them to the Farah Rud station in Bala Baluk. Bala Baluk materials are in the Farah Rud ANP compound, awaiting the ANA to escort them to Farah city. ANA and Marines are currently escorting materials from Baqwa to Farah city.

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